

## JAPANESE WORKING PEOPLE'S HOME LIFE AND HABITS.

As one walks in Yokohama and Tokio through a multitude of narrow streets lined with tiny buildings, writes a correspondent of the San Francisco Chronicle, the foreign and characteristic air lent to the scenes presented comes from the fact that in each separate little open shop some single workman, like a bee in his cell, in a way so different from our Western method, is busily plying his trade.

When I had dissembled my wonder at seeing the dressmaker holding one end of his seam with his toes; had returned the polite bow of a young cooper who was skillfully utilizing the same members in his binding of tubs with vegetable withes instead of metallic hoops, and had watched with admiration the wondrous way in which a basket-maker was helped out by his ingenious combination of ambi and pedal dexterity, I suddenly felt a new wish. I wanted to see these quiet and clever working people at home in their houses as they actually live.

Then it was explained that all the little shells of open shops lining the narrow streets and roadways were likewise the veritable habitations of the humanity about me. I soon saw that this was true, and was ever thereafter fascinated by the endless glimpses of interiors and studies of the home life of the common people.

There may be one room or two in the small domicile; commonly a second room exists behind the first. A very small separate kitchen may or may not be a part of the establishment. The culinary operations are so simple in character and the utensils so limited that but few feet of space at best are needed to contain them.

The partitions being in the form of sliding panels, all may be thrown into the shop during the day or otherwise, as elected. So in this country the worker is still at home to a great extent while he plies his trade, and factory, stock of goods and shop, as well as dwelling place, are all under one roof and appertaining to one man.

Down at the hatoba, or dock, in Yokohama gangs of Japanese coolies load and unload the steamers in a leisurely, semi-desultory, casual and happy manner all their own. Not a bag or bale could they lift without their accompanying song of:

Yoi-toe cor-ah sai-ya,  
Yoi-toe cor-ah sai-ya.

For just when the heavy emphasis comes two men sling the weight on to the shoulders of a third, who trots off with it, and the next two wait for the chorus to come around again to the right syllable before they proceed as before. It is jolly, musical and quaint in the extreme. If the back of the overseer is turned for a moment all the industrious laborers will sink on their heels and light their pipes, which look like a penholder with an infinitesimal thimble bowl at the end.

At the other side of town are the great tea-firing go-downs, redolent, blocks away, of the subtle herb. Inside, in rows, are the big firing cauldrons, with charcoal fires beneath, and filling the place all up and down are the lines of women with towels wrapped about their heads, swaying, bending, sometimes rhythmically, sometimes spasmodically, stirring vigorously with hands and arms among the hot tea leaves. Scattered here and there among them is a man or boy. Presently a song starts up, and fitfully pulsating throughout the great building it echoes in a sort of primitive or elemental wild harmony from all the jerking figures, lightening and facilitating labor.

All workers, at whatever trade, are given in the middle of forenoon, and afternoon, as at noon, an interval for resting and eating, and many babies

bowls and square wooden boxes of cooked rice, and drinking tea from cups like good-sized thimbles. Besides the dressmaker and tailor, the cooper and the basket-maker are other artisans pursuing their avocations in quite as queer ways. The carpenter hacks at his boards with a sort of rough adze or stands on them and saws them with what looks like a notched butcher's knife set in a long handle, or planes them carefully toward him. The man in the rice mill ignores belts and wheels and machinery generally, and jumps all day on the end of a plank, a cog or weight in the other end of which pounds away at the grains. The lantern-maker and the umbrella-maker sit patiently tying and pasting their frail wares, the stock in trade slowly piling up, day by day, behind them. Lonely men, each in his little booth, make the thick straw mats or sections of flooring for the native houses. Boys work deftly, tossing shuttles back and forth that weave or tie the bamboo window blinds.

I watched an actual boy with warts on his hands, at work alone in an open doorway, on a great square of pale blue silk on which he was embroidering without model or copy the most exquisitely shaded pink roses. Little girls sitting on the floor hem-stitched silk handkerchiefs and made the fragilely beautiful drawn and embroidered grass-linen work. A couple of blue men, with hawk noses and severe countenances, like American red men gone a wrong color, bobbing about among their indigo vats, will be the whole visible works of a big dye-

streets still more conveniently to refresh the toiling masses. The meager coppers so scantily earned jingle all day right merrily into the pockets or pouches of the caterers.

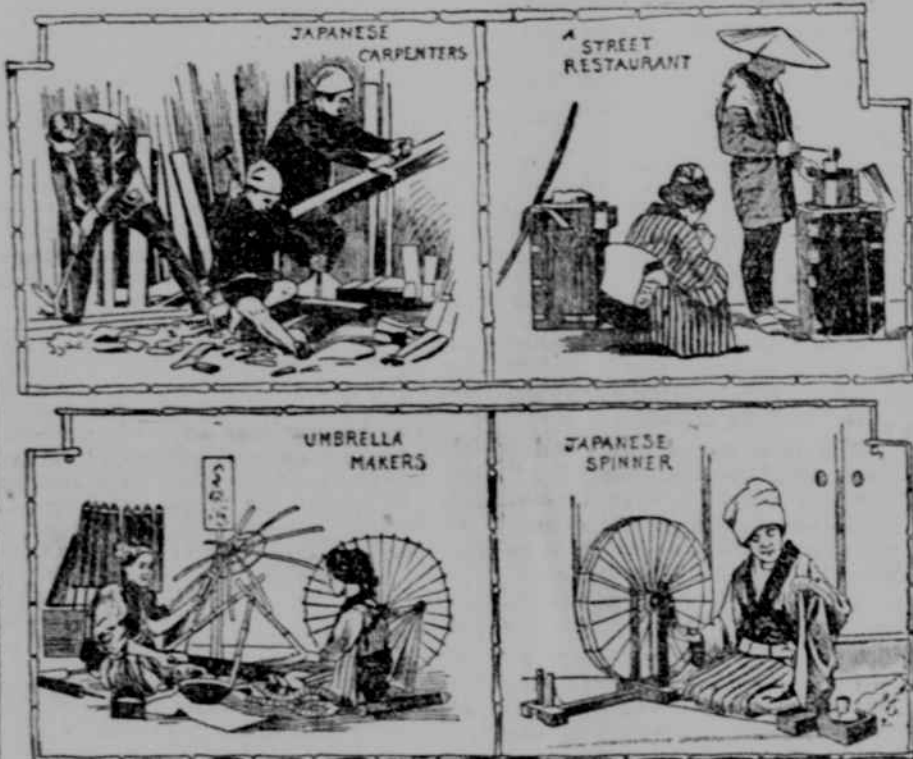
Babies are everywhere swarming about, afoot and aback, with their share of the good things going. Nobody seems ever to startle and depress



BROOM PEDDLER.

them with "You mustn't do that," "You can't have this," "You mayn't go there." Among the common people, at least, there is no sequestering of women; they, too, are everywhere, cheek by jowl, helping and doing, apparently, as freely as the men. If it is only a wooden tub which they have to scrub out, girls with bare feet and arms, elaborately dressed hair and clean and pretty blue and white kimonos, are apt to bring it out on the sidewalk and scrub away gregariously for the next half hour or more.

Unloading great stones from the sampans in the canals, women work as cheerfully, lustily and effectively as the men. They share, seemingly on equal terms, in the small shop keeping, and help in all the labors of the various avocations. I don't see how one of these men can have any secrets from his wife or escape her society on



ing establishment. In front of six shops, young men with simple appliances, working in the dust of the roadway, jostled by ricksha men and ball-throwing youngsters, reel off silk into skeins or quickly twist it, in a sort of wayside ropewalk, into variegated silken cords.

Perhaps the most interesting of all are the women in small, open rooms who sit all day at primitive frames throwing by hand the shuttles in and out that weave the web of silk or cotton. It is a pretty and poetical way of achieving the fabric we are to wear. I can but contrast the lives of these quiet workers in their open doorways, under the blue of heaven, their eyes sometimes wandering away with pleasure to the shifting street panorama before them, with those of the thrice wretched seamstresses, factory hands and sweat-shop women in our own cities. It is small misfortune to be bare-limbed, perchance; to wear cheap cotton, to eat only rice, in a land where the fashion for all, even the well-to-do, is not widely different. I have seen the weary and old countenances of little children and the hard ones of young girls, thronging out of our mills and manufactories, but these better faces of the Japanese women at their hand looms are less hopeless. And I would that this callous, hurried scrambling world had time to weave its textiles all in the old way of those early ages when so much sorrow was not.

There seems nothing grim, over-severe or crushing about Japanese labor. It is essentially sociable and cheerful. Every third shop is a place of estables, where hot sweet potatoes, rice coated with delicate seaweed, hot fish or shrimp fritters dipped in soy, rolls of fish wrapped around bean and sugar paste, buckwheat macaroni with soy, tasty morsels broiled on skewers, sugared beans and roasted nuts, parched or popped rice kernels, rice wafers and cakes browned over the fire (and if still pale, painted to the right tinge with brown dyes), rice paste or jelly, sweet millet paste candy, popped rice candy, cups of shaved ice and numerous other dainties and sweetmeats, are ever at hand for the delectation of the workers. But this is not enough, and men with vases and boxes of cooked food perambulate the

the plea that business will detain him at the store. If business did, he would probably find her there before him, as much at home as in the kitchen or nursery, which apartments, in truth, seem to be pretty well done away with; and if she wasn't there in person, at least all the other women on the block would be in the near vicinity, able to supervise his movements.

Living is reduced almost to its simplest elements here, where a single garment will do for a covering, and that, if necessary, for years; where a few cents' worth of rice, pickled vegetables and dried fish make an appetizing and satisfying meal, and where a single bare room for dining, for guests and for sleeping is practically all that is required by even ambitious householders.

In Japan the poorest people are not without their comforts and conveniences. Cooked foods, so cheaply prepared in public kitchens, have been mentioned. Milkmen and other purveyors are in almost every block, with their goods in smallest packages if desired, for the fractional copper currency. The housekeeping is the easiest, and at the same time the daintiest, in all the world. No dust and dirt ever are brought in to tarnish the fair white floors. The low-ceilinged, empty rooms and narrow verandas are readily brushed and washed each day. The mats on which the poor man sleeps are as soft as those of the rich.

Bathhouses in the neighborhood, too, are frequent, where the tired mother and all her fretful progeny, wearied by the heat and the hours of work, at the close of the day enjoy their regular evening hot and cold water plunge and splash.

The improvidence of these people probably is in no danger of being exaggerated in the telling. It is doubtless quite true that the impoverished ricksha puller or factory operator pawns his bed daily to buy his breakfast, and after earning enough to redeem the futons before night, recklessly expends in riotous living in the ten eating houses the whole balance of his capital. He looks as if he does all that he is accused of in the way of ever patching his blue kimono instead of buying a new one, in living in one-year-a-month houses, and of handing down to his descendants only the same

pots and kettles, without a single addition thereto, which he in his day inherited from his parents. But that he is to any extent unhappy, miserable and wretched over it I very much doubt. I have watched him singing (and lingering) at his work, and going home at night in droves, still cheerfully sociable, solaced with his tiny pipe and fairly hilarious over the least morsel and drop of rice and cheap sake. I have gone with him to his matsuri, or festivals, and I know how often they recur and how light-hearted they find him. I have stood with him to laugh at the fun-makers and dancers at the frequent street celebrations and local fetes, and I don't believe there is much rancor and bitterness to his poverty. Besides, his wages are going up. Guilds he has had always, and he is learning about strikes. Dock laborers get eighty cents a day now, where formerly they received nearer to eight. Considering their labor capacity and the cheapness of their living, the former is not a bad wage. Ricksha charges, those for laundry work, and of various craftsmen (as all the dyers in Osaka, who have just procured themselves a twenty-five-per-cent. raise), the wages of house servants and the salaries of policemen and other officials, all are slowly and steadily increasing, and the explanation is that the wants of life are on the increase, meat is beginning to be eaten, wool is coming to be liked for clothing, some simple luxuries are now understood and desired, and so the time is to come when the workingman of Japan is to have rather more of the conveniences and necessities of life to buy, and considerably more money with which to purchase them. At least that is considered the trend of affairs at present.

### German Carp Is Unpopular.

If a fish dealer depended upon the sale of German carp for a livelihood he would starve in double-quick time. That particular member of the fish family is several hundred thousands of miles away from the pinnacle of popularity, and there is nothing these days to indicate that it is going to decrease the distance. German carp are quoted, wholesale price, at a penny a pound.

"How in the world do you manage to make anything out of them?" asked the inquisitive buyer of the South Water street fish dealer the other day; "I don't see where it pays to handle them."

"It really doesn't pay to handle them, nor does the fisherman who catches them make a fortune out of his business," said the fish dealer. "Just imagine what the fisherman makes when we are supposed to sell at a profit at a penny a pound. He wouldn't do right well even if he had a good business. German carp are far from being entitled to recognition as fine fish. They are coarse in flesh, and it is an impossible matter to refine them. I handle them because there are some people who buy them from me. It is not that I sell them for a reasonable profit, but merely as an accommodation."—Chicago Record.

### Detecting a Thief by Smell.

Abyssinia, the oldest monarchy in the world, had much the same government, laws and customs three thousand years ago that it has now. One of the most curious of these is that of "thief-smelling."

When a robbery has been committed and is reported to the Lebashi, who answers to the Chief of Detectives in New York, he compels one of his subordinates to drink a decoction made from a plant which throws him into a state of something like that produced by hashish or opium-smoking before the stupor. While thus intoxicated the detective is supposed to have a supernatural power of smelling thieves. The method of utilizing this power, described by the Abyssinian traveler, Dr. Krapp, consists of tying a stout rope around the detective's



ABYSSINIAN THIEF-CATCHER AT WORK.

waist and allowing him to crawl up and down the village street, the free end of the rope being held in the hand of the Lebashi.

Whenever the thief-smeller enters a house its master is at once convicted of the theft without further evidence. The person who has been robbed is sent for and made to swear to the value of the stolen property, and this value must be paid at once by the owner of the house to which the scent has led the able detective.

### Hundred Dollars Apiece For Walnut Trees

James A. Anderson made the largest purchase of walnut timber last Wednesday ever made in this section of the State. He bought of J. C. Hamilton, on Flat Creek, 100 choice trees out of about 175 trees on his farm for \$1100. This timber will be exported to Europe.—Owingsville (Ky.) Democrat.

### WORDS OF WISDOM.

Find a way or make one. Everything is either pusher or pushed. The world always listens to a man with a will in him.—Marden.

The only worthy end of all learning, of all science, of all life, in fact, is that human beings should love one another better.—George Eliot.

A loving confidence in the God we have offended is the key to his heart, the key which unlocks the treasury of his grace.—Rev. E. M. Gouldburn, D. D.

The are no songs comparable to the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the prophets, and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach.—John Milton.

If you would be well with a great mind, leave him with a favorable impression of you; if with a little mind leave him with a favorable impression of himself.—Coleridge.

When God sends darkness, let it be dark. 'Tis so vain to think we can light it up with candles, or make it anything but dark. It may be because of the darkness we shall see some new beauty in the stars.—The Story of William and Lucy Smith.

Restraining grace is an amazing work of God. It is more wonderful than his setting a bound to the sea, that it cannot pass over. Think what a hell every unconverted bosom would become if the Spirit were to withdraw and give men over to their own hearts' lusts.—McCheyne.

The universal reign of love, creating new economies, a new commerce, new politics, a new social life, supplanting greed of gain with passion for service, and mutual competition with mutual helpfulness, unreal as it seems to us, immersed in the struggle and held by the habits and ruled by the ideas of to-day, is yet the destined result and fulfillment of the centuries and ages of divine teaching.—Philip Moxom.

Creation is the organ, and a gracious man finds out its keys, lays his hand thereon, and wakes the whole system of the universe to the harmony of praise. Mountains and hills, and other great objects are as it were the bass of the chorus; while the trees of the wood, and all things that have life, take up the air of the melodious song.—Spurgeon.

### Caught the Entire Swarm.

A queen bee Thursday led her swarm of 7000 odd subjects right into the heart of Rochester, N. Y., and a telegraph pole was selected as the final resting place of the swarm. Their presence attracted a large throng, but it made many of the pedestrians somewhat nervous to have a swarm of bees hovering about them, and, though the bees do not appear to have stung anyone, they were inclined to be altogether too familiar for comfort.

Walter B. Bargy is a man who has passed his life in the care of bees, and, as the ill luck of the swarm would have it, he happened to be passing along while they were cutting up their antics. He determined to attempt their capture. He took an ordinary soap box and climbed to the top of the pole. He was surrounded by the insects, and they could have stung him to death had they chosen to do so. But they seemed to recognize him as a friend, and none of them interfered with him. He set the soap box on top of the telegraph pole and awaited developments. In about half an hour about half the bees were swarming inside the box.

He climbed up again, slipped a newspaper under the box, and took it down. But he was not content with the capture of only half of the tribe. He took the box across the canal and set it on the pile of logs just under the canal foot bridge. On the top of the box he set a keg, and this proved so much more attractive that the bees began to leave the box and crawl in thousands into the keg. The bees which still lingered about the pole on the other side of the canal crossed over, and by night Mr. Bargy took to his home 7000 bees. They are worth \$15 or \$20, so he had done a pretty good day's work.—Chicago Chronicle.

### Interesting Work of Mound Builders.

The Dayton Journal says that Fort Ancient, which is picturesquely situated on the high bluff overlooking the valley of the Little Miami river, near Lebanon, Warren County, Ohio, is believed to be the largest, best preserved and most interesting work of the Mound Builders. It has been visited and studied by the leading archaeologists of Europe and America, and models of it are now on exhibition in the museums of London, Paris and Berlin. The fort, which covers about one hundred acres, and one hundred and eighty-seven acres outside of the walls, is now the property of the State, part having been purchased in 1890, and the remainder in 1896.

### Novel Cooking Method.

In Bosnia one of the Austrian batteries had to go into action just as dinner time came on, and the artillerymen, resolved not to lose a meal, cut their meat into small trips, placed it on the breech of their guns and cooked it by the heat of the metal. They found it delicious, and voted the bistek a la entasse de cannon infinitely superior to beefsteaks cooked under the pommel of the saddle, Tartar fashion.



RICE SHELLING.

on the backs of small brothers and sisters wait about the tea-firing places that at the regular hour, they, too, may partake of refreshment.

This interval of rest is so elastic in its application that there seems hardly an hour of the day when one group or another of ricksha men by the roadside, of boatmen in the canal, of coolies in the go-down, compounds or of craftsmen in the shops may not be seen gathered, seated on their heels, about the little charcoal fireboxes, plying their chopsticks in small lacquered